

# LUTHERAN WOMAN TODAY

OCTOBER  
1989


## Decision Making and Leadership

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*For Growth in Faith and Mission*

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# LETTERS

## to Letter

is ironic that the July issue  
usivity carried a letter that  
ff as being on the exclusive

writer reported that  
gh her women's group gave  
subscriptions to all new  
they preferred to give their  
to World Hunger rather  
ve LWT subscriptions to  
n whose minds only function  
ally in their later years, dual  
women . . . or the others who  
not accept it in the spirit in  
it was given."

response is not intended in  
y to minimize the need to  
nerously to World Hunger.  
old Lutheran tradition we  
n both body and spirit.  
t know what is meant by  
ears" but to this 73-year-old  
our magazine is wonderfully  
ing. And although I cannot  
for dual career women, I  
e they are in no less need of  
ath of fresh air LWT offers.  
uld think anyone in her right  
ould appreciate a gift  
ption to Lutheran Woman  
—how lucky can you get?  
*Olive Spannaus (LCMS)*  
*Seattle, Washington*

## ivity—July '89

posted [the July cover] next  
daily calendar to remind me  
oneness in the Lord.  
grant us all we need to  
ue [to be inclusive] beyond

our immediate neighborhood and  
church.

*A. Marella Smith*  
*Onalaska, Wisconsin*

The July issue was tremendously  
meaningful to me personally.

Having spent most of my life in  
small communities where there  
was practically no interaction with  
folks of other cultures, it has taken  
a great deal of "growing" to accept  
people of races other than my own,  
even though we know it's what our  
Lord wants of us. The articles  
chosen were very helpful.

"The Wounded Deer" was a  
glimmer of hope to my daughter  
and me in our efforts to help her  
chemically dependent daughter.  
Thank you so much.

*Edna Shimerda*  
*Omaha, Nebraska*

It was humorous and somewhat  
embarrassing to read about "inclu-  
sivity" in a magazine titled  
*Lutheran Woman Today!* It will  
take more than [this] for Christian  
leaders to live inclusively when so  
many functions within the church  
are labeled for men or women only.

*Cynthia Johnson*  
*Cardington, Ohio*

## Correction

In the September *Lutheran Wom-  
an Today* article "The Lutheran  
Education Connection," three  
names were misspelled: students  
Bobby Padilla and Eduardo Ben-  
itez, and teacher Preston Meyer.  
LWT regrets the errors.

## CONTRIBUTORS

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The writer of "Global Sisterhood," **Kathy Magnus** is assistant to the bishop of the Rocky Mountain Synod. Magnus also serves on the executive committee of the ELCA church council. She is married and the mother of two teenagers.



**Marlene Wilson** ("A Call to Servant Leadership") is chair of the ELCA Division for Ministry churchwide board. Wilson, a consultant, trainer, speaker and author, has written three books: *How to Mobilize Church Volunteers*, *The Effective Management of Volunteer Programs*, and *Survival Skills for Managers*.



**Patricia Krause** ("Midwife Natalie, Wise Old Tomas") is the national coordinator for the Behrhorst Clinic Foundation, which supports a health and development program in highland Guatemala, in Central America. From Norwalk, Connecticut, Krause is a member of the board of education there and a teacher of English as a Second Language.



**Tina Krause** and the **Rev. Oscar Kraft** each offer insights to the decision-making and group process called "Sharing Wisdom." Krause, a certified associate in ministry, is a resource specialist for the ELCA Division for Congregational Life. Kraft is the program director for mission and ministry development in DCL. Krause comes to the Lutheran Center in Chicago from serving congregations in the Pacific Northwest; Kraft from parish ministry in the United States and Cairo, Egypt.





## Editor's Notes

ve you been *empowered*? By n? What has empowerment t to you?"

began a small announcement May 1989 LWT. In its call for es LWT requested short essays readers "which pay tribute to empowering person in your life explain how that person has d empower you."

y women responded with trib- Their essays grapple with the of empowerment and what it s in a life of faith. They ac- ledge God as the source of all owerment. They eloquently of praise and gratitude for em- red everyday saints who in turn e others.

ur of the essays received are d on the following pages. But so want to briefly share with ome of the faith-filled thoughts in other tributes.

omes as no great surprise that, roup, mothers and grandmoth- ere the focus of the most trib- Lucy Radatz from Kensington, esota, wrote of her "Grandma ": "Rose would not be viewed as powerful. She was empower- imply by her being we were en- . . . In [her] love we found our- both lovely and loveable."

hope to continue my grand- er's legacy of leadership," writes la Hardie Jensen (Duredin, la). "Her work has served as a model empowering me to move larger challenges of service and rship."

rtle Wilson, age 93, of Crooks- Minnesota, paid tribute to her er, who died at the age of 97. "I

am thankful for the example of my mother's God-given faith. Her fortitude in times of stress, her joy in times of simple pleasure, her belief in God's concern for all of his children became an inspiration to me." "My mother is the best translation of the Bible I know," comments Rachel Haverlah (Round Rock, Texas).

Others, like Margaret Bark (Menomonie, Wisconsin) spoke of her extended family, of generations sharing an empowering legacy . . . where "there is lots of forgiving and accepting of one another. . . ."

**E**qually as interesting and powerful were those tributes offered to women friends—especially neighbors. Kathryn Kvinge (Minneapolis, Minnesota) writes of the empowerment of neighbors, saying, "We often talk about the wonder of what we did for each other."

Debbie Silverberg (Sacramento, California) writes of her friend "Sassy," who showed her "with God's love anything is possible."

"My best friend is sent to me from God," writes Angela Fowler (Springfield, Ohio) of the young woman with whom she's experiencing college life.

Nancy Knochel of Prescott, Arizona, wrote that when her mother was ill, her women's circle became an empowering community for her. Before she left a meeting "the women encircled me and prayed for my mother's healing . . . I felt the presence of the Holy Spirit working in the group."

**O**thers wrote of the pastors, pastors' wives, women's leaders and faithful church people who empow-

ered them through their welcome, affirmation and encouragement.

Alice Heil (Columbus, Ohio) writes of Neva Korn, who was an American Lutheran Church Women's district president: "Neva was always there for me—reassuring me, assisting me, and always praying for me."

"Without their affirmation," confesses Shirley Mickelson (Mount Vernon, South Dakota) of Pastor and Mrs. O. M. Knudson, "I'm sure none of the joy of service would have been mine."

Women of the ELCA churchwide board member Nancy Mitchell received a tribute from Nancy Soeken (Great Bend, Kansas). Soeken writes: "She has helped . . . she has encouraged . . . she has shared her faith."

The empowerment that comes from the faith and witness of others echoes throughout almost every tribute. Cynthia Cowen (Escanaba, Michigan) writes of a friend turned sister-in-faith: "Her example has enabled me to empower others."

When Linda Parks's (Columbus, Ohio) grandmother died, she was asked if there was something of hers she might like. "I answered 'her faith,' but little did I realize then [that] she had already passed it on to me."

About her neighbor, Marjorie Stokes (Grove City, Minnesota) comments: "Though she never preached, never reproached, never asked, 'Are you saved?', and mentioned her faith only in passing . . . it was clear that her daily zest for life came from living with her Maker."

Empowerment comes from individuals in the community as well as people in the church, family and neighborhood. Ann Paull (Manchester, Pennsylvania) was a frail child,

and pays tribute to her empowering first-grade teacher who, through her actions, said "Come, I want you to. You are up to the task."

A woman in therapy who is working through problems with co-dependency speaks of an empowering counselor. "Applying Christian principles," she writes, "my counselor showed me that all I needed to overcome my obstacles was healthy self-esteem and faith in Christ's promise."

The empowering, ordinary people God gives us in our lives receive Janis McRae's (Dutton, Montana) tribute: "When I think about how, since birth, I have been surrounded by people who live ordinary lives of faith, I realize that this is nothing to take for granted. . . . Quietly, but constantly, Christ sprinkles my way of faith with the nourishment I need through my everyday experiences. . . . My tribute is to each and every one of God's children, ordinary people, not, even including me."

Reading and editing the essays has been an enlightening, empowering experience. The tributes are prayers of praise and thanksgiving for the faith and witness of the faithful. As we come closer to God through the empowering believers in our midst, may others see God's hand in our lives.

The four essays that follow are offered with praise and thanksgiving for the empowering faith, life and witness of Mabel Rajala, Margarete Rilling, Ruth Kuhlmann, and Helge Emilie Kamiske. ■

*Sue Edison-Swing*

ASSOCIATE EDITOR





## Mabel Rajala: *Empowered to Love*

Nancy Lee

The sign along the highway as we entered the small town that hot July day read, "Bigfork, Minnesota, the last frontier!" Tucked in the bend of the Bigfork River, surrounded by tall whispering pines, the town seemed to belong to the frontier days of years ago. My husband had accepted a call to Bigfork and Effie Lutheran churches (the town of Effie was seven miles north).

"How big is Bigfork?" asked a pastor's wife in Minneapolis as we packed to move from the seminary.

"It's about 500 people," answered my husband, Gib.

"Is that baptized or confirmed?" she inquired. We laughed at her expression when we assured her that the number referred to the whole community, not just our church!

Mabel Rajala came into my life that first week we were in town, and her life was to have a great impact upon mine in many ways. First there were the phone calls to see if we needed anything. The calls were brief and to the point: Gib would be left with the receiver buzzing in his hand, his mouth open, for Mabel would speak her piece and promptly hang up without saying good-bye. She had said what she had called to say and could see no reason for taking unnecessary time on the phone when there were so many other things to be done.

Tales of almost legendary proportions were told to us of Mabel's trips into the surrounding woods to help the individuals and families living there who needed food, clothes, friendship, toys, caring. Mabel went about her mission of empowering people quietly, by herself, with no fanfare.

As grateful people told stories of her caring, those listening would nod their heads knowingly and say, "Yes, I know. She came to our house once when. . . ." Little did I realize that soon I would learn of her caring ministry firsthand.

The day after Mother's Day in 1964, the membership of Bigfork Lutheran Church increased by two. I gave birth to twins in the back bedroom of the parsonage while my husband stood by in absolute shock. Two beautiful healthy babies arriving five weeks early! The entire community celebrated with us, and Mabel swung into action.

As I nursed the babies and cared for our three other children, my strength seemed to ebb out in all directions. Mabel understood. She had, at one time, lived with her five children in a cabin in the woods, caught water in a rain barrel, cooked on a wood stove, washed in a tub. Life had not been easy for her, and as she told me later, "God willing, I'm going to see to it that you don't come close to a breakdown like I almost did."

While rocking one of the babies to sleep one morning, I heard strange noises in the basement. When I investigated, I found Mabel on her hands and knees scrubbing the back entry and the basement. "Go sit down," she ordered. "I'll take care of this." And she did—the kitchen, too. As we stood in the kitchen later to say good-bye, she cast her eye on my curtains and noted, "Your curtains are dirty!" Down they came and out they went over Mabel's arm, only to reappear washed, starched, pressed, and hung again at my windows, just in time for the company coming for the twins' baptism the next day.

As the months passed and the babies grew, she would call at least once a week to say, "I'm coming over. Get ready to go out." I would start to protest, but the phone was already buzzing in my hand and I knew Mabel was on her way.

She would arrive at my door with a large bowl full of bread dough in her arms. This she would set on the middle of the kitchen table and the kids would punch and poke to their hearts' content. From all this attention the bread would later bake into loaves a foot high.

I would be banished from the house to walk about the streets of Bigfork. Sometimes I would stop for a cup of coffee with another friend along the way. My body, mind, and spirit would be refreshed when I returned home.

Once, over a cup of coffee as my children played about our feet, Mabel talked about her five children and their



growing and leaving the nest. Someone had recently commented to her that it must feel good to be done with all the responsibility of rearing children, and that now she could relax. To this Mabel replied, "Nope! I still have to pray for them!" And she did.

Mabel empowered by her caring. She never waited to be asked; she never let the protests of her intended recipients deter her from the tasks the Lord had placed upon her heart.

Mabel Rajala, empowered to love by Jesus, by her example empowered me to love in Jesus' name. "No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in union with us, and his love is made perfect in us" (1 John 4:12, TEV).

*Nancy Lee is a homemaker, artist, speaker and mother of six. She and her husband (an ELCA pastor) live in Glenwood, Minnesota.*



## Margaret Rilling: *The Witness in the Library*

Dorothy Isdahl

Our church has a wonderful library and the woman I want to pay tribute to is the head of the library, Margaret Rilling.

Margaret had lost her husband, Jim, in 1981. In spite of her own troubles, her quiet strength enabled her to continue in her ministry to others. Members of the congregation come to her for information and answers to their questions. She is so knowledgeable she can go right to a book (and we have 5000) and say, "Maybe this is what you're looking for, to give you some answers."

About the same time I was wrestling and struggling with some questions: *Who is this God in whom I place my faith? Is life worthwhile or are we just survivors? Does God speak to me? Can I know his will for me?*

Gradually I began asking Margaret many questions about life, theology, coping, and more. Over the years she introduced me to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, C. S. Lewis, J. B. Phillips, Winfred Rhoades, Alvin Rogness, Conrad Hyers and many more. She has helped me get hooked on using Bible concordances, dictionaries and commentaries.

Margaret shares her faith openly with me, but never force-feeds me dogma. She doesn't answer my questions before I ask them. She gives me room to search as God's Holy Spirit leads me. She always has time to share in my



## IN YOUR LIGHT I GREW

*Honoring Persons  
of Faith*

In a letter accompanying the tribute she submitted to LWT, Debbie Silverberg wrote: "Thank you for making this opportunity available to the women of the ELCA. There are people who leave a lasting impression on our lives. It means so much to be able to acknowledge these people."

The many essays LWT received in response to the call for tributes is a testimony to the gratitude we feel toward those who have influenced our faith journeys. The affirmation inherent in being

thankful and being thanked is a powerful means to support and encourage each other in the body of Christ.

*In Your Light I Grew: Honoring Persons of Faith* is a respectful and joyful resource produced by the Women of the ELCA. This program allows church groups to 1) praise and thanksgiving the saints in their midst in their histories and 2) support the Women of the ELCA.

*In Your Light I Grew* is a celebration litany, during which the names of the honored are read aloud and/or



joy of new discoveries.

Part of her ministry to me has been her encouragement to take risks to follow where God leads me. When I say, "I can't," she says, "Why can't you?"

These aren't world-shaking events. It is just the stuff of everyday living, but each day is a new day of excitement as God's child. I don't see life as happening randomly, but rather that God is in the common things; that living with an awareness of God and how he wants us to respond to the gift of life brings a joy and peace beyond understanding.

*Dorothy Isdahl of Mankato, Minnesota, is the mother of three and the grandmother of three. She and her husband enjoy traveling and restoring antiques.*

tten on paper ornaments  
be placed on a potted tree  
branch limb. An offering is  
ten in thanksgiving for  
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support the churchwide ef-  
s of Women of the ELCA.  
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their lives by submitting  
ays to the magazine. In ap-  
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is pleased to make a \$250  
ation to the *In Your Light*  
ew Women of the ELCA  
d—in the names of those  
ognized in the tributes.  
y God continue to bless  
d keep all those who offer,  
d receive, praise and  
nks.

*In Your Light I Grew* proj-  
kits were distributed in  
January 1989 Women of  
ELCA resource packet.

The project kits include the celebration service, two sample ornaments, two sample post cards for notifying those honored, suggestions for use, and an order form (for ordering additional ornaments and post cards).

To obtain another project kit (one per congregation, while supply lasts) write to: *In Your Light I Grew* Project Kit, Resource Information Services, 8765 West Higgins Road, Chicago, IL 60631.





# Ruth Kuhlmann: *She Empowered Me to Lead*

Stella Borgmann

One day in September 1961 I attended a meeting of our local American Lutheran Church Women in order to “defend” myself. The nominating committee was having trouble getting names for the ballot, and had contacted me about placing my name on the slate for president. Even though I had said no, I had this feeling that I might still be nominated from the floor. So I attended the meeting just in case.

I hadn’t been very active in ALC Women. I had three children—twins and a third child born very close together. We were surviving on a very limited income—in our first three years we did not even have electricity—so we were doing without modern conveniences. There just was not time for extra activities in my life. My twins had just begun school a few weeks prior to that September day in 1961.

At the meeting several women were nominated for president from the floor, and each one refused to accept the nomination. Then I was nominated. I was so embarrassed that the pastor attending the meeting should hear all of those excuses that I did not have the nerve to say no, and ended up being elected. How helpless I felt!

The vice president was a woman about 20 years older than I, Ruth Kuhlmann. She was quite active in all phases of the church and definitely knew the ins and outs of being an officer. She took me by the hand and very lovingly led me through that year. She made it such a pleasant experience that I ended up serving five terms as president, from the start of that term in January of 1962 through the last days of ALC Women and the transition in 1988



to Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Upon finishing my last term of office, I wrote a thank-you piece for our church newsletter. As I wrote, I realized I also owed Ruth a proper thank-you.

Ruth had been living in Florida for several years. I knew she had cancer, but I didn't realize how advanced it had become. She lived only another three months after receiving my thank-you letter.

A few weeks after her funeral in Florida, I received a letter from her husband, Walt. In that letter he told me how much that "thank-you" had meant to Ruth, so much, in fact, that it was read at her funeral.

My hope is that I can be as much of an influence to someone as Ruth was to me. And for all the others who influence my life, I will remember to say thank you.

*Stella Borgmann served as an American Lutheran Church Women president from 1962 to 1988. A mother of three with four granddaughters, Borgmann and her husband farm in Athol, Kansas.*



# Hildegarde Emilie Kamiske: *The Godmother Who Came Forward*

Joan Regal

Hildegarde Emilie Kamiske is my godmother: she stood at the baptismal font and made promises to God about my spiritual well-being. She is also my "spiritual mother" because of what I have seen and learned of God through her.

Forty-six years ago, in a theater that served as a Lu-

theran church on Sundays, Hildegarde stepped forward to offer her presence, to be my “God” mother. She didn’t know my mother, she didn’t know me.

My mother was alone in Lansing, Michigan. It was war-time, and my father was stationed in Texas. Hildegarde Kamiske, believing that God is shown through God’s people, came forward. Hildegarde Kamiske didn’t think my mother should be alone. What did it mean that day to step forward? What has it meant to me all my life to know her loving presence?

Hildegarde Kamiske, unmarried and a clerical worker, was in her 40s at the time of my baptism. I have seen her in person five times in 46 years, yet she is more real in my life than some people I see daily. She remembered me on every birthday. Every Christmas there was a gift. The gifts were small. I remember a dollar bill in a card. I can’t really remember other gifts. What I do remember is being thought of and cared for by someone far away in another state. I remember being thought of and cared for by someone who was not family. I remember being thought of and cared for by someone who loved me for all I am and even in spite of what I am not.

What a demonstration of love—of God’s love. God communicates through people. I have learned about a love that isn’t dependent on what I do—it simply depends on my being. It is a love that comes unbidden. It doesn’t depend on being in the physical presence of someone, on being seen or heard. Yet there is never a doubt of its consistency. There is never a doubt of its grace.

I have been empowered by God’s love, God’s grace—through Hildegarde Emilie Kamiske. She became 91 years old in August. I have not had a letter or a card from her in well over a year. My mother was able to talk to someone about Hildegarde when she visited Michigan a summer ago. Hildegarde, still in her home with her brother, is failing. She isn’t able to write, to crochet, to talk on the phone, to even want a visit.

Now, I send cards, write letters that I know won’t be answered, send pictures I’m not sure she’s able to see. Now, I am God-present—each card, each note my gift of love and of caring. I am empowered to love, to care for Hildegarde. I am empowered to love, to care for others. I am empowered to come forward so that others may see God through me. ■

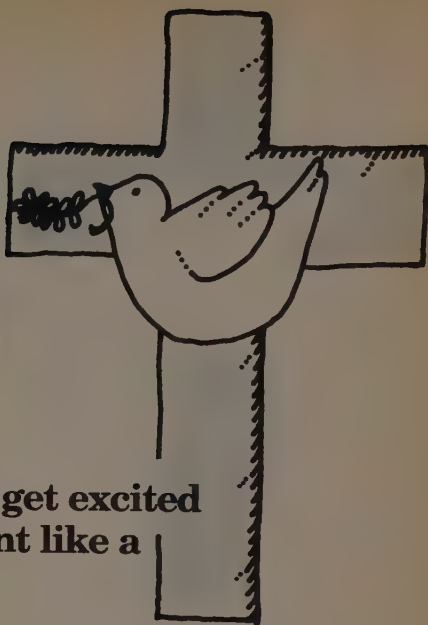
*Joan Regal is president of the St. Paul-area synodical women’s organization. A “professional volunteer,” Regal is the mother of four and the stepmother of three.*



# A Call to Servant Leadership

Marlene Wilson

never thought I could get excited  
about a formal document like a  
constitution.



Institutions have always seemed hierarchical and unappealing to my grass-roots nature. But, I must admit, I am deeply moved and inspired by many of the statements in our new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Women of the ELCA documents. For example: This church affirms the universal priesthood of all its baptized members" (ELCA Constitution, p. 48).

Leaders in this church should demonstrate that they are servants in their words, life-style, and manner of leadership" (ELCA Constitution, p. 24).

And the constitutional principles of the Women of the ELCA reinforce these concepts by declaring that *people will be involved in decisions affecting them* (Section 7) and *leaders will enable others; support them and empower them* (Section 8). [See outside back cover for full text.—ED.]

These are stirring, bold declarations which clearly lay the business of what this new church is and will be at the feet of every one of us who

call ourselves ELCA members!

These strong theological statements are grounded in basic Lutheran concepts such as "the priesthood of all believers" and the "whole body of Christ." Still, declaring these intentions is easier than carrying them out in the practical, everyday life of the church.

Let me share some of the major challenges I see before us as we attempt to "make real our ideals" in the areas of leadership and decision-making. These include vision; leadership style; participative decision making; giving of time, talents and money; and creative optimism for the future.

## Vision

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18, King James Version). In almost all the most recent books on leadership and management, four key words appear repeatedly: *vision*, *empowerment*, *integrity*, and *service*. These are the

traits that people long for in their leaders today.

What does *vision* mean? One author defines it as "a target that beckons." Another says it's "a preferred future." Basically, a leader with vision is able to see beyond *how it is now* to *how it might be in the future* and is able to share that vision in a way that inspires, motivates and excites people to work toward that preferred future. Mission motivates. A leader whose eye is on the future and not the status quo moves the group forward.

## Leadership Style

I believe the church as a whole must learn and model an entirely new style of leadership. At all levels, *leading* has too often been *doing* (as opposed to involving and empowering others), and this has put both decision making and carrying out the ministries of the church in the hands of a few.

This ministry of a handful is directly opposite to the priesthood of all believers. Leadership success has too often been measured by how many hours a person has put into a job, rather than how many others they have involved. Our new constitutional mandate asks us to realize that *doing* is not *leading*!

The church is calling for servant leadership. The goal of this kind of leadership is not just getting a job done—but involving the people af-

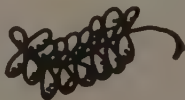
fecting by decisions in making those decisions. It also means investing time and energy in helping members in the group discover their God-given gifts and talents so they can use them in ministry.

Author Robert Greenleaf offers this test for servant leadership: do those being served grow personally as they are empowered, or do they become more dependent? And as Richard Foster observed in his book *Celebration of Discipline*, "When Jesus stooped to wash the feet of his disciples, he redefined greatness!"

## Participative Decision Making

Involving members of any committee or organization in the decision about what will be done for the year and how it will be done, is time-consuming. It seems so much quicker and easier for the officers or chairpersons to "just decide" and then tell the others what to do. This style is used extensively in many churches—and it may just help explain why there are so few willing volunteers to carry out programs! A basic motivational principle is this: *people become committed to carry out goals they help set.*

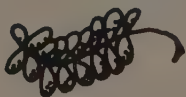
The time invested in bringing people together during planning is saved many times over by getting more members involved in carrying out those plans. It is also the key to



At all levels, *leading* has too often been *doing*, as opposed to involving and empowering others.



Our church—in fact, most churches—  
has not paid nearly enough attention  
to the direct link between  
volunteering and giving.



ving the growing problem of  
nment” in leadership. Instead of  
persons being the committee,  
lead a group who is the com-  
tee.

he other amazing thing about  
p decision making is that a  
p can almost always solve a  
blem, or develop a plan, more cre-  
ely than any single individual, no  
ter how good that person is. It's  
ed “group wisdom” and it's won-  
il. [See related article on “Shar-  
Wisdom,” page 27.—ED.]

first became truly convinced of  
value of participative decision  
ing in a creative writing course  
ok. Every week our instructor  
ld give us the beginning of a sto-  
nd then he would have each of  
inish the story in our own way.  
h week I was amazed, because  
30 adults in the class almost al-  
s wrote 30 completely different  
ngs. This experience made me  
ize that not everyone thought  
a Norwegian Lutheran from  
tana!

ow rich and varied our back-  
nds, experiences and ideas are,  
how vital it is to tap that diver-  
as we plan for the future of the  
A and Women of the ELCA.

is also important to note that  
y boomers” highly value parti-  
ciple decision making. One way  
he ELCA to be more effective in

reaching and involving this impor-  
tant generation might be to incor-  
porate these leadership styles in  
church planning.

## Giving of Time and Talents and Giving Money

“Income to support churchwide ac-  
tivities of the Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America in 1988 fell \$15.8  
million short of covering expendi-  
tures, said ELCA treasurer George  
Aker” (*The Lutheran*, May 3, 1989).

That is a shocking statement! How  
can we be a church of vision—a  
church that is growing and reaching  
out to a nation and world in desper-  
ate need—when people have evi-  
dently assumed a “wait and see” at-  
titude about their giving and  
supporting of the new church.

I suggest that our church (in fact,  
most churches) has not paid nearly  
enough attention to the direct link  
between volunteering and giving.

In an important 1988 Gallup Poll  
study entitled “Giving and Volun-  
teering in the United States,” it was  
discovered that volunteers contrib-  
ute an average of 2.4 percent of their  
annual income to charity, while non-

volunteers contribute only 1.3 percent. In other words, volunteers contribute almost twice as much of their income to charity as nonvolunteers. And, the study found that people tend to give their money where they volunteer their time. Therefore, one important means of increasing benevolence is to increase volunteer participation.

It is time that we Lutherans pay as much attention to people's pledges on their time and talent sheets as we do to their financial pledges. We can no longer systematically ask people what they are willing to share in the way of gifts and talents, then ignore them and keep asking the same small handful to do everything. It not only violates our theology—it clearly affects the giving of dollars as well. The future of our church is at stake!

## Creative Optimism for the Future

I am one of those mothers who loved the "terrible twos" stage in our children. The traits that describe them best are creative, imaginative, energetic, curious, persistent, playful and willing to risk.

I believe we are now living through the "terrible twos" of our new church—and I would love to hear people describe us in those very same terms. It is vital that we recognize and encourage the energy, excitement and creativity of our new church. We need the buoyancy of optimism to help us translate the ideals of our constitutions into the reality of our faith lives together. ■

**"The seed is a tiny, wrinkled, ugly thing, and anyone who doesn't know better might think that it's useless. And it's the same with the word of God, it seems to me, when the person that receives it doesn't know what contains."**

That's Donald's interpretation of "The Parable of the Sower." Donald is a farmer, a *campesino*, living in Nicaragua.

His thoughts, along with the reflections of other members of a Nicaraguan Christian community, Solentiname, are captured in this attractive book, *The Gospel in Art of the Peasants of Solentiname*. It contains 31 reproductions of paintings rendered by the peasants based on gospel stories, along with their comments on the stories. There are reflections by Old Tomas, "who can read, but always talks with wisdom" by Natalie, midwife for most of the children of Solentiname; by Gloria Esperanza, Oscar, Rebecca, young Julio, and others.



*The Gospel in Art by the Peasants of Solentiname*  
edited by Philip and Sally Scharper  
(Orbis Books, 1984, \$14.95).

# Midwife Natalie, Wise Old Tomas, and Other Peasants

**Patricia Krause**

Nicaraguan priest Ernesto Cardenal nurtured the Christian community of Solentiname beginning in 1966. Father Cardenal employed a refreshing technique for spiritual growth: he turned his sermons into group dialogs.

These dialogs, translated to English, serve as a simple and profound commentary on the gospel message. For example, about "The Parable of the Sower," Olivia comments: "I think that Jesus spoke of the seed because he was talking to the campesinos. . . . He is talking about seeds and birds that eat the

grains and plants that die of over-soaking and of swamps, because that's our language."

The words of the peasants are good. The pictures are even better. The sower, in straw hat, light shirt and blue jeans, casts his seed on his plot of land. You see the rocks. You see the familiar thorny places. You

**And this is  
your sign: you  
will find a baby  
lying wrapped in  
swaddling  
clothes, in a  
manger.  
Luke 2:12**



also see a selection of birds pecking away at the miscast seeds. But look at the flowering tropical trees around the farmer's plot! And count the toucans and parrots perched in the trees! The longer you spend with the primitive painting, the more details of Central American peasant life become apparent.

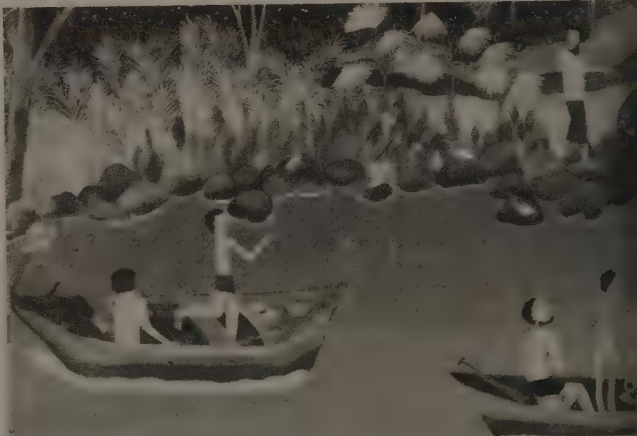
The "Flight into Egypt" of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus is a gospel story a community of refugees and oppressed people can relate to. With a few possessions in a small bag,

stoned streets into the town square. The Last Supper is celebrated in a splendid bamboo building. And, as you might imagine, it is rifle-toting military police who participate in the capture of Jesus in the garden.

The resurrected Christ is pictured walking through a tropical garden cemetery, in which simple white crosses stand amid lush, colorful vegetation. "The important thing is that he's alive wherever there's community," comments William. And Olivia adds, "The news is not only about his

**And he  
said to them,  
"Come follow  
me, and I  
will make  
you fishers  
of men."**

**Matthew 4:19**



some bananas for sustenance, and accompanied by their skinny dog, the holy family is pictured as they steal away to safety.

Fernando (a Jesuit priest) comments: "We can imagine what this means: leaving at night, hiding, with great fear, leaving everything behind, and having to reach the border because they are being pursued."

We see Jesus preaching in the Nicaraguan countryside. He eats and celebrates the Wedding of Cana on the tiled patio of one of the nicer homes in the village. The entry into Jerusalem is a parade on cobble-

resurrection but about ours."

*[To read a complete excerpt from the book, see the meditation on page 47 in this issue. The front cover shows a portion of Solentiname artist Marina Silva's depiction of Matthew 5:1-12 (the Beatitudes).—ED.]*

Now the questions: Does this book matter to me? To us? As the Christians of Solentiname asked of Scripture, "What does this mean to us?" We might make the same inquiry about this book.

I've not been to Nicaragua, but I have been to nearby Guatemala many times. Perhaps that's part of why I



**Jesus took  
bread, blessed  
it, broke and  
gave it to  
them, and  
said, "Take,  
this is my  
body."**

**Mark 14:22**

on to the words and paintings of  
book. Just weeks ago, some oth-  
women from the United States  
I walked the dirt roads of high-  
Guatemalan villages. We saw  
marketplaces, trekked through  
ers' fields, sat in schoolrooms  
on the patios of humble homes.  
On one hand, our lives couldn't be  
different from the lives of the  
ants of Solentiname, Nicaragua,  
dians of highland Guatemala.  
n typing this article on my word  
essor. A Central American peas-  
woman most probably can only  
e her name. As I finish a few  
e paragraphs, my automatic  
er is going through its ordered  
s. Laundry for a peasant wom-  
eans carrying bundles of soiled  
es on her head, scrubbing it at  
er or a large community *pila*, or  
r tank, and spreading it out to

on my head or shape and slap corn  
meal into smooth, round tortillas,  
and it would be cause for a good  
laugh throughout the village.

And should I have to weave the  
fabrics that will clothe my family, all  
of my ability with word processors  
and automatic washers would ren-  
der me useless—and leave us all  
very chilly.

So different are our lives! Different  
skills. Different demands. And very  
different views of what's important  
to know in order to survive. Differ-  
ent, yes. Yet, if the gospel has any-  
thing to say about this—and it  
does—we are one.

We have one Lord. One gospel.  
One hope. And we are one body of  
Christ. Many members, yet one body.  
We are joined together by faith and  
linked, mysteriously, magnificently  
and miraculously by one Spirit.

I get stuck on a sentence or two  
write, I take a break and fill a  
with ice and a cold drink. For  
ral peasant woman, even the  
r that made my ice cubes is a  
y she might never know. Most  
ges do not have safe sources of  
ing water.

k me to balance a jug of water

It does us good to listen to each  
other and to learn from each other of  
the Spirit's activities in each and  
every part of the body of Christ.  
We're all better off when we take the  
time to appreciate each other. *The  
Gospel in Art by the Peasants of So-  
lentiname* makes that task enjoyable  
and spiritually enriching. ■



# The Light of the World

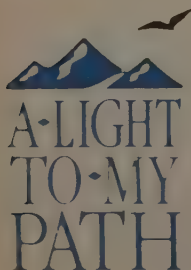
Study Text: John 9:1-41

Nancy and Craig Koester

The story of the man born blind is a story of healing. It tells how a man who was blind from birth received his sight. Jesus performed a miracle when he made this man see. But even more important, Jesus gave the *spiritual sight* of faith to this person. Think of a time when you have received healing whether physical, spiritual or emotional. Briefly share this story with the group if you are comfortable doing so.

## Bringing God's Works to Light

**1** Read John 9:1-7. This story deals with a man who had been blind from birth. In today's society people who are blind can and do lead productive and rewarding lives. In first-century Palestine, however, the blind were often on the margins of society. This man was forced to beg for a living (9:8), as were other blind people such as Bartimaeus (mentioned in Mark 10:46). When in this passage the disciples ask Jesus why the man was born blind, what possible explanations do they mention? What assumptions do the disciples make in their question (9:2)?

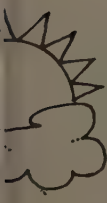


**2** The way in which the disciples understood the connection between sin and a condition like blindness was not new. Look up the following passages and note how they relate to what the dis-

es say: Exodus 20:4-6 (which is part of the Ten Commandments); Deuteronomy 28:15-18, 28:28-29 (which is of a list of punishments for disobedience); and Job 1, where one of Job's "friends" tries to explain why children had been killed.

In John 9:3, Jesus rejects the notion that the man's blindness was punishment for sin. Jesus does not try to gain what caused the blindness. Instead, he sees the blindness as an opportunity for God's action. The disciples looked to the past in asking about the cause of the blindness, but Jesus looked to the future for how God might use the situation. In this story, how did the blindness become an opportunity for God's action?

Think of a time in your life when you or someone else might have wanted to ask, "Why did God let this happen?" How might Jesus' words in 9:3 be assuring in such a situation? Were there ways in which difficult circumstances became an opportunity for God's action? Are there also times when it might be inappropriate to speak of a hard situation as God's opportunity?



Read 9:4-5 again.

In this passage Jesus refers to the period of his earthly ministry as "day." As his public ministry drew to a close, he said, "The light is with you for a little longer" (12:35). Then, just when Judas left the Last Supper to betray Jesus, the gospel says "it was night" (13:30). Jesus knew that he had a certain period of time on earth and would continue to work "as long as" he was in the world (9:5).

■ Jesus indicated that his followers also would have opportunities to do the works of God. He said, "*we* must work the works of him who sent me while it is day" (9:4). After his resurrection, he said again, "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (20:21), suggesting that his followers would continue the work he began on earth.

5

In what ways do Christians today continue Jesus' work? What specific kinds of activities might be involved? Think of activities that take place within your congregation, vocation and other settings.



■ Sometimes one hears that a person must have faith before he or she can be healed. The problem is that people of faith do not always recover from serious illness or injury. At such times a person may feel guilty or inadequate for not having "enough faith." This is not consistent with the biblical understanding of faith and healing which relates the two in different ways throughout the New Testament. Sometimes a person believes before he or she is healed; at other times only *after* the healing takes place (see Matthew 9:22; John 4:53). Some passages focus on the faith of the person who actually is healed; others deal more with the faith of the person's friends or family members (see Matthew 8:10; John 4:49-50). In John 5:1-16 Jesus even heals a man who showed no sign of faith before he was healed and who reported Jesus to the authorities after healing.

6

Who initiated the healing of the blind man in John 9? How much faith did the man have before he was healed? Can this story be reassuring to people who wonder if they have "enough faith"?

7

Can you think of a modern instance when Christian faith played an important part in a person's recovery from illness or injury? Can you think of an instance where someone's faith seemed to begin with a recovery from illness or injury?

## Blindness and Sight

8

Read John 9:8-41. In this passage the neighbors, the man born blind, the parents, and the Jewish authorities show various reactions to the miracle of healing.



The story unfolds in several scenes. Using the chart below, briefly identify who is involved in each scene and what takes place.

Verse	People involved	What takes place
9:8-12		
9:13-17		
9:18-23		
9:24-34		
9:35-39		
9:40-41		

One theme which binds these separate scenes together is how the former blind man comes to faith in Jesus. How does the man perceive Jesus in each of the following passages: 9:11, 9:17, 9:33, and 9:38? Note that there was a similar progression in the faith of the Samaritan woman (4:9, 4:11, 4:15, 4:19, 4:29).

Throughout a lifetime, a Christian comes to know Jesus in different ways. How have your perceptions of Jesus changed throughout the years? If you are new to the Christian faith, what were your perceptions of Jesus before you became a Christian? In what ways has your understanding changed?

Throughout Chapter 9, the former blind man is asked difficult questions by other people. What role did such questioning play in the man's development of faith? Has there been a time in your own life when someone asked you a question that helped you grow in faith?

**12** The man born blind was not the only one whose perceptions gradually changed, according to John 9. How do the religious authorities perceive Jesus in the following passages: 9:16, 9:24, 9:28-29, 9:39-41? Compare the changes taking place in the religious leaders with the growing insight experienced by the former blind man.

**13** John 9 both begins and ends with the issue of the connection between sin and blindness. Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* contains several definitions for the word *blind*, including literal meanings like "sightless" and figurative meanings like "unable or unwilling to discern or judge." How is the term *blind* used in 9:1-2? How is the term used in 9:39-41?

**14** The words that the Revised Standard Version of the Bible translates as "sin" in 9:2-3 and "guilt" in 9:41 actually come from the same Greek root. At the beginning of the chapter Jesus made it clear that physical blindness is not punishment for sin. What is the connection between sin and the spiritual blindness mentioned in the final verses of the chapter?

### **Bearing Witness to the Light**

**15** Read John 8:12-20. In this passage, Jesus announces that he is the "light of the world." Note that much of this passage uses legal language. What words or expressions in these verses would be appropriate in a courtroom?

**16** John 8:12-20 involves a discussion about the Jewish legal principle that two witnesses are needed to substantiate a claim (Deuteronomy 19:15). How do Jesus'

ers use this principle against him (John 8:13)? How  
Jesus use the principle in his own defense (8:17-



Like Jesus, the man born blind had to testify in situations that resembled a courtroom. Although Jesus is the central figure in the gospel, for most of Chapter 9 he is absent, as you may have noted in the list of scenes you made in the section "Blindness and Sight" (page 23). The story of the man born blind is a moving example for Christians who are called to bear witness to their faith without Jesus being physically present.

Note that the blind man bore witness to Jesus in different settings. Sometimes he was questioned by Pharisees (9:8-12) and later by religious leaders (9:15-24, 9:26, 9:28). How would you describe the attitude of these people toward the man born blind? (For example, were they curious, hostile, suspicious, puzzled,

How does the man begin his testimony in 9:11, 9:25? What additional kinds of information does he provide in 9:27-33? How would you describe the tone or manner? For example, was he meek, feisty, humorous,

In what kinds of situations have you spoken for Jesus? Consider conversations with your family, friends, church study group, church council or a discussion with someone outside of the Christian faith. In what ways does the blind man provide a useful example for Christians today?

Note that the blind man's parents were very quiet in their responses to the Pharisees. They were accused of being "put out of the synagogue" (9:22). They



were not alone. The same problem is mentioned again in 12:42-43 and 16:2. Consider that a synagogue, like a church, was more than a building. It was the center of a community of people. What might it actually mean to be "put out of the synagogue"?

21

The parents of the man born blind were affected by the changes that were taking place in their son's life. They acknowledged that the healing had taken place, but they were noncommittal about what the healing meant. How do you view their handling of the situation?

22

Do you know of a contemporary situation in which one member of a family either became a Christian for the first time or experienced a marked renewal in faith? How did the change affect the other members of the household? If the person with the newfound faith asked you how to deal with the situation, what might you say? If another member of the household asked you the same question, how might you respond?

### **In Closing**

Think about the needs for healing in your family, neighborhood, or congregation. This could include needs for physical, spiritual, or emotional healing. Share these concerns with a group and resolve to pray about them during the week.

### **Worship**

The hymn "Amazing Grace" (*Lutheran Book of Worship* 4) draws some of its inspiration from the blind man's experience "one thing I know, that though I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). Sing this hymn together.

### **Looking Ahead**

To prepare for the next session, read the story of the raising of Lazarus in John 11:1-53. Think about the ways in which faith in Christ helps people who grieve. ■

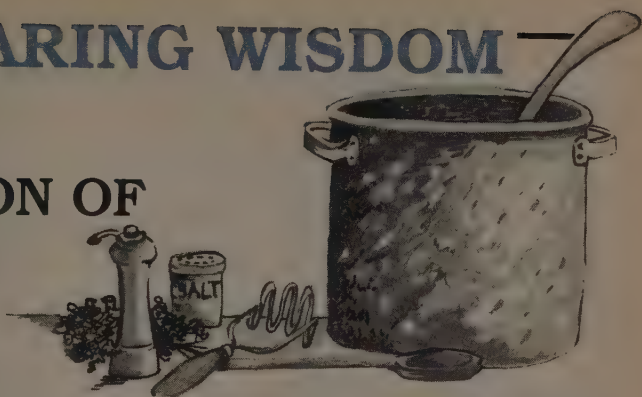
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# — SHARING WISDOM —

## TRADITION OF WISDOM

by B. Krause



AS A YOUTH GROWING UP in a misty, rain-dripped corner of Oregon, I helped my mother aunts and cousins prepare the day meals for which our families early gathered. Though I didn't appreciate it at the time, it was in company of these women that I learned about the process detailed in Sister Mary Benet McKinney's book *Sharing Wisdom*.

In the preparation of these meals, decisions were made about how the tables would be set up, and when the clothes should be put on to boil so they wouldn't be done before the day. Consultations were held regarding which bowl should be used for which dish, who will make the bread and who will say grace.

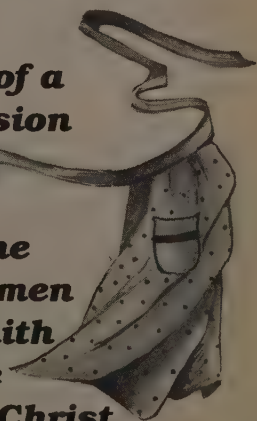
These decisions weren't made by elementary procedure, but usually by someone concerned put on her "two cents" until a practical solution emerged. Leadership and tasks weren't divided as much as they were assumed on the basis of skill and age and experience. In this process we shared, comforted and encouraged one another, and learned by

doing. More or less on time, dinner arrived on the table.

McKinney's book put me in touch with my own experience of decision making. Through her book I became aware of a tradition of decision making and leadership that emerges profoundly out of the experience of women and out of our faith experience of the incarnate, risen Christ.

A marvelously humorous and earthy woman, McKinney is the prioress of a Roman Catholic Benedictine community and high school in Chicago. Her process for decision making begins with the understanding that "our God is the God of the Gathering." She explains that God is certainly found in Scripture, and in the sacraments, but, and this is a pivotal qualification, McKinney

***I became aware of a tradition of decision making and leadership that emerges out of the experience of women and out of our faith experience of the incarnate, risen Christ.***



maintains that "we also find this God of ours within our very lives and within the lives of one another—present in the gathering as we strive to be and to build the church."

McKinney concludes: "Through the presence of the Spirit in our lives and in the lives of one another, the Risen Lord calls, forms, challenges, affirms, speaks, listens, lives!"

McKinney simply and articulately addresses the powerful implications of the church taking seriously this "God of the Gathering." While she limits her specific applications of the model to the function and operation of church councils, the reader is easily able to see the many possible implications of this process for the development of congregational leadership, organization and life in community. Embodied in reading the book is the process itself: it awakens the individual and the gathering to the unique and many ways the Spirit of Wisdom is discerned and empowers the people of God to "be and build the church."

The shared wisdom model encourages us to take the time to uncover, for ourselves and collectively as the church, our own heritage of spirituality and giftedness. To discover our own unique experiences of God in our lives and common experiences. To discern that out of the humble, steamy kitchens of our mothers and out of the tomb where Jesus was laid, emerges a kind of power. This power is the wisdom of God that empowers us to work, to lead, to serve, and to make decisions together—living out our faith

in joy and love.

## LET'S SHARE WISDOM

Oscar H. Kraft

Church groups, councils, and committees make decisions all the time. For the most part, when the "big" decisions are being made, some form of parliamentary procedure is used.

Unfortunately, parliamentary procedure, with its emphasis on winning, winners and losers, and minority/majority positions, can exacerbate conflict within the group and inhibit the group's ability to make community decisions.

Fortunately for God-centered groups, Mary Benet McKinney offers an alternative to parliamentary procedure in her shared wisdom model.

This model of sharing wisdom places people and decisions in the context of spirituality. In it people

***Fortunately for God-centered groups, Mary Benet McKinney offers an alternative to parliamentary procedure in her shared wisdom model.***



their experiences are received as a gift from God. The gifts and experiences are reflected upon and shared with others, in the process of shaping mission decision. Members of the group are seen as gifted by the Spirit to enable and build up the group.

Crucial to this approach is the spiritual preparation of those who participate in it. Members of the group must be open to their lived experience and willing to listen to the voice of God in others as well. Participants using this model believe that through the process of sharing wisdom the will of God is revealed, discerned, discovered. Decision making using the shared wisdom model follows an ordered progression:

**First, all the facts and data needed for the decision are gathered and shared to the group before the decision makers come together.**

**Second, the individuals, by themselves, prayerfully reflect from their experience on the data and the decision to be made. This is the opportunity and responsibility of each person to listen to God.**

**Then, thirdly, the participants share their wisdom and insights with one another, listening and valuing each person's perceptions, insights and wisdom.**

After sharing, one at a time, the group listens and tests for consensus. Each person should see a hint of their own wisdom, but no one person should see only his or her own wis-

**Participants using this model believe that through the process of sharing wisdom the will of God is revealed, discerned, discovered.**

dom in the decision. The group considers itself as a container for the wisdom of God in which the spirit of God is poured.

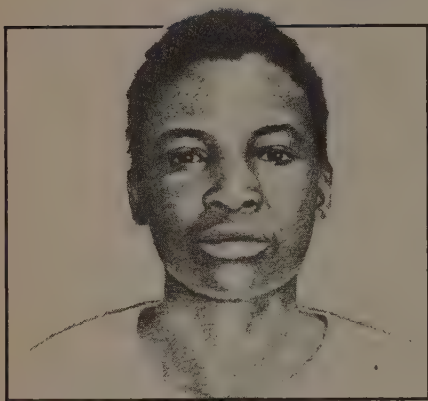
Groups most likely to be successful using a shared wisdom approach are: open to new ways of thinking and feeling; accepting of information and data collected by others; willing to let go of the need to control; free of the need always to be right; and able to risk the unfamiliar.

To facilitate a group's use of a shared wisdom approach, each group member needs to: understand the difference in personality types; learn process skills; engage in reflective prayer; take the time to gather wisdom; and accept the discerned decision of the group as the will of the Spirit. ■

**Sharing Wisdom** by Mary Benet McKinney, OSB (Tabor Publishing, 1987, \$7.95 plus shipping and handling) may be ordered through the Women of the ELCA 1989-90 catalog or through your nearest Augsburg Fortress location. Order number 40-449-8735.

# Global Sisterhood

Kathy J. Magnus



**Rauna**

**We've prayed for my sister daily. Now by God's grace she is coming home.**

My "sister" is coming home! What excitement there is in the family. Is there anything more eagerly planned than a family reunion? That's especially true because, as a family, we've come through some particularly difficult times.

We've prayed for my sister daily—at the breakfast table, in church on Sunday mornings and each night before bed. Now by God's grace she is coming home.

Rauna is four years younger than I. She was born in Okadiva, Namibia. In her late teens she began work as a nurse in the Englela Hospital. When she was 23 she became a member of the Southwest Africa Peoples' Organization (SWAPO), because it seemed to her the only road to freedom. In 1975, the year my son

Cory was born, she was arrested by the South African security police, taken to the hospital and taken to the Ogoni Detention Camp.

During her interrogation she was asked if the hospital had been giving medicine and money to the freedom fighters. She told them no. They beat her. Some used their hands, some the butts of their guns. When she complained that she was tired and needed to sit down, they took a rope, tied her arms behind her and hung her against the roof for long periods of time. After eight days Rauna was moved to the Ondongwa prison. The food she was forced to eat was inhuman. She was accused of hiding information.

She was taken to a small room where there were many pictures of her dead countrymen on the wall. She was told to search until she found the picture of our brother Usko. From there she was taken to another room where there were snakes. She was told if she did not tell the whole truth she would be bitten by the snakes. She spent more than four hours in the snake room in utter terror.

Her trial began in Swakopmund in February, six months after her arrest and incarceration. Rauna was asked by the judge why she had joined SWAPO. She explained that she must be involved in the liberation of her country. After being sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, Rauna was taken to Kroonstad in South Africa where she served her sentence. She was released with an explanation in March 1977. She

ed to the hospital and resumed nursing career.

ree years later she was arrested n by the South African military e. She was asked again about stance to the freedom fighters. was questioned about the activ- of her Lutheran pastor and con- ation. They tied her arms be- her back and blindfolded her, electricity was attached to her rs. It was switched on and off. owing this she had electric ks inflicted with an instrument er head. Her torturers ridiculed God.

n October 17, 1980, she was tak- y truck to an unknown destina- off the main road. She was put cell and covered with a blanket. ng the night she removed the ket from her head. As punish- t for removing the blanket, she tied up and hung from her feet was warned that the blanket t not be removed for six weeks. ere was no trial. She was taken vakopmund where she returned rsing under police surveillance.

On Christmas Eve 1980 she escaped to Angola. I have not heard from her except for reports that she arrived safely in Angola. Now I have received news that my sister can return home. Namibia is moving toward freedom.

Rauna Nambinga is my sister. I eagerly await news. Is she alive? Is she well? Has she married and borne children in the refugee camp? Rauna is my sister. Rauna is your sister. She is coming home! Let us begin the preparation for the celebration!

All of us are called on as sisters in the faith to remember with special prayers our global sisters. We are tied to women like Rauna as sisters through a deep faith and abiding hope. We are tied to these sisters because of our common bonds of being women. You and Rauna and I bake bread, rock babies, laugh and weep together, hold one another up, care for aging parents, keep dear the memories of times long past, earn wages, sweep floors, cry over our loved ones and look with hope to the future. You and I may never have the

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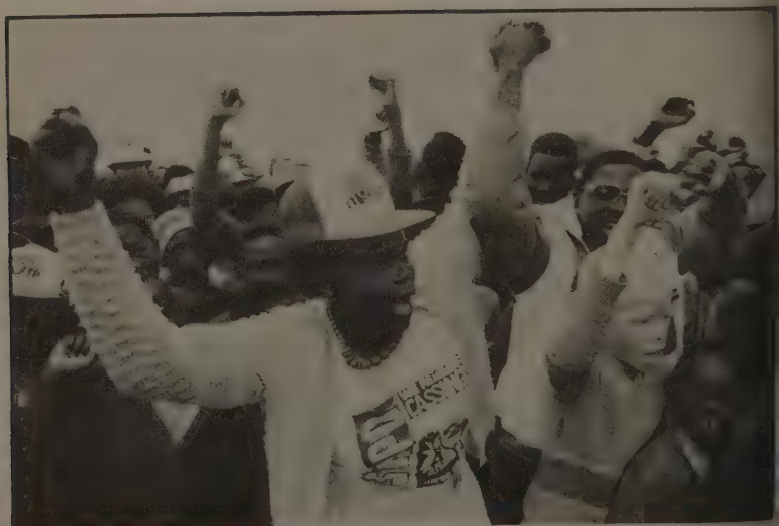
privilege of actually looking in our sister Rauna's eyes. We may never be able to give her a hug of encouragement. But that does not diminish our sisterhood. We know of her story—and her faith. And we are, together, one in the spirit.

Take time today to pray for a peaceful settlement and joyous homecoming for these Namibian sisters of ours. Rauna will feel our arms about her. We will build each other up in love, for we are a sisterhood of faith. Our sister is coming home! Let us celebrate!

*Gracious God, keep Rauna and all our Namibian sisters in your hand. Protect them as freedom slowly and painfully comes. Keep them safe from harm, give them courage and renewed hope. Help them to know of our love and concern. Draw us all close to you as you envelop us all in your mighty arms. Amen. ■*



Namibian woman and child, refugees in Kwanza Sul Camp, a project of SWAPO



Namibia, May 4, 1988. SWAPO supporters mark the 10th anniversary of the singa massacre. In 1978 the South African Defense Force attacked a refugee camp inside the Angolan border and killed 600 people and left 1000 injured.

both United Nations Security Council Resolution 435 and the agreement on withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola establish timetables for freedom for Namibia. Here are some key dates in this complex process. Rejoice in prayer as freedom comes closer, remembering Rauna and all our sisters in Namibia. Consult news media for updates on these items.

**December 22, 1988:**

Signing of peace treaties at the U.N.

**March 31, 1989:**

Beginning of withdrawal of first 1000 Cuban soldiers.

**April 1, 1989:**

Arrival of U.N. Transition Assistance Group. Formal cease-fire begins. [However, fighting continues between SWAPO and South African troops.]

**June 6, 1989:**

Amnesty proclamation and reversal of some discriminatory laws.

**June 12, 1989:**

Start of the refugees' return.

**June 25, 1989:**

Election campaign begins.

**June 29, 1989:**

Protestant bishops demand withdrawal of Koevoet (counterinsurgency unit), asking world's help.

**July 3, 1989:**

voter registration begins.

**July 20, 1989:**

Political prisoners released by South Africa.

**November 1, 1989:**

Election for Constituent Assembly.



Kathy Magnus has never met Rauna Nambinga, but she read about her in a 1982 *Dateline: Namibia* (see graphic on page 30, which shows Rauna as she appeared then.) Since then, Rauna has been, in a special sense, a part of Kathy's family. Rauna's and Kathy's stories show the potency of words on paper, and, even more, the potency of prayer.

The photos that appear with this article are from Namibia, which has been identified as an area of special concern for Women of the ELCA. LWT encourages its readers to follow Kathy Magnus's example, and pray for the country and people of Namibia. For a copy of the most recent issue of *Dateline: Namibia*, which offers helps for becoming involved in Namibian concerns, write the ELCA Distribution Service, 426 S. Fifth St., Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440; or call 1-800-328-4648. The cost of *Dateline: Namibia* is 20 cents per copy, plus \$1.00 handling; postage extra.—ED.

## REVIEWS



### WISE WOMEN BEARING GIFTS

**Wise Women Bearing Gifts: Joys and Struggles of Their Faith** edited by Suzan D. Johnson (Judson Press, 1988, \$6.95).

**T**his book contains 14 profiles of women who played pioneering roles in the acceptance of women in lay and ordained ministry. The women profiled share a common determination to use their unique gifts for God's glory. Author Suzan D. Johnson notes "... I realized there was a distinct difference in being a female who expressed gifts for the ministry and one who was male who expressed the same desire." This collection explores that difference and celebrates the courage of faithful women determined to serve the Lord.

*Karen Midgarden  
Hoople, N.D.*



### LISTEN TO THE HUNGER

**Listen to the Hunger: Why We Overeat** by Elisabeth L. (Harper/Hazelden, 1988, \$6.95).

**E**lisabeth L. shares her personal struggle with food (and eventual alcohol) abuse. She understands that food is often consumed as a substitute for other hungers—such as hunger for support and nurturing. Food

and alcohol, she discovers, only serve to temporarily pacify and mask symptoms of need.

This book, only 85 pages long, is a good resource for gaining understanding of the driving forces behind overeating, both in ourselves and those we love.

*Gwen M. doVale  
Lorena, Texas*

### SAFE IN JESUS' ARMS



**Safe in Jesus' Arms** by A. Saeveraas; translated by Harry Cleven (Augsburg, 1988, \$5.95).

**B**orn in Ethiopia, little Selamnesh is born to a life full of struggle. Selamnesh's future seems hopeless when disease wipes out her village, but God has plans for her. God's Aunt, filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, comes to raise Selamnesh with her sister. The girls learn about God and about abundant love. Through the power of the Holy Spirit the lives of Selamnesh and those around her are changed.

Through the sensitive telling of this true story, we feel a kinship with a Christian sister in Ethiopia.

*Corinne Gibson  
Albuquerque, New Mexico*



## SHORTTAKES

SONIA C. GROENEWOLD

### Brief Prayers on News Items

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#### Ecumenical group takes 'meeting point' abortion stance

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Members of Church Women United met by an overwhelming majority to support a resolution opposing the criminalization of abortion." The assembly expressed the ecumenical group's "longtime commitment to the movement of justice for women," its president, Claire Randall. Recognizing its diversity, the group adopted a policy which does not permit a divisive stance on abortion. Randall said the resolution did not alter the group's position. In addition to opposing attempts to criminalize abortion, the resolution promises that the group will promote awareness and education among its members. It will work with the various communions on the legal implications and ethical ramifications of the criminalization of abortion.

*Lord, abortion raises so many questions in us all. Be with us as we struggle with the issue. Especially be with those who personally are faced with the decision.*

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#### ELCA looks at domestic violence

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The ELCA Commission for Women is confronting the issue of family violence and educating the church on the subject. A brochure, part of the *Leaflet Ministry* series, is available from Augsburg Fortress. "Facts about Domestic Violence" (23-9570) defines and lists the signs of abuse as well as advises on intervention strategies and help for the abused and the abuser.

*Remind us, O loving Lord, that abuse is not your intention for our lives and that you treasure us all.*

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#### ELCA member designs Vietnam women's memorial

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A Vietnam veteran, Diane Carlson Evans from Northfield, Minnesota, helped create a statue representing female Vietnam veterans. Pending final approval this year, it will be placed alongside the statue of infantrymen and the wall at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C.

*Bring healing, Lord, to all those who experienced the horrors of war.*

Read your daily newspaper and build a prayer list to be revised as needs change.

*Sonia C. Groenewold is news editor of The Lutheran.*

# OSTEOPOROSIS: MORE THAN JUST CALCIUM

Despite the many articles about osteoporosis, most people are still "bone dumb." And our lack of knowledge about this hazardous bone-thinning disease makes us even more susceptible to it.

Experts estimate that almost 20 million of us have some form of osteoporosis and one million of us will break bones weakened because of the condition each year.

Osteoporosis occurs when the dominant mineral in bone, calcium, is removed at a faster rate than it is replaced. Our bodies need calcium not only for the bones of the back and hip but for teeth, gums, muscles and hundreds of metabolic and cellular functions.

Though osteoporosis affects both women and men, it is eight times more common in females than males. Women's smaller body size means there is less calcium mass to begin with. Pregnancy and breastfeeding also take a toll. (A pregnant woman's skeleton is, in a sense, "raided" to make the skeleton of the unborn baby). Menopause, either natural or surgical, poses an increased risk. And women are at increased risk because they have a longer life span.

There are several other factors

that cause thin bones for to woman. First, women today smoke more and drink more alcohol than ever before. Both habits increase calcium loss. Second, they also consume more carbonated drinks which are rich in phosphates that bind calcium in the digestive system. Also, popular weight-reducing diets are typically low in calcium.

Another diet issue is our reduced consumption of Omega-3, an essential fatty acid (EFA), found in fish oils. EFA is a critical part of the walls surrounding each cell in the body. When the diet is deficient in EFA—as most are in the United States—the cell wall "leaks" calcium.

Others at risk include those who 1) belong to fair-skinned races such as Caucasians and Native Americans have a denser bone structure; 2) follow a strict vegetarian diet; 3) are very thin or small-boned; 4) do not get enough vitamin D in their diet or do not receive 10-20 minutes of sun exposure daily; and 5) are on hormone therapy.

How can we reduce the risk? Like many other things in God's world, it requires balance:

## DIET

Make sure your diet provides enough calcium. Try to get at least 600 milligrams a day. This will require four servings of dairy products or non-dairy equivalents, as described below. (Note: if you are pregnant or nursing a baby, you will need twice the amount of dietary calcium.)

### Dairy:

8 ounces of low-fat yogurt,  
1½ cups of milk or cottage cheese.

### Non-dairy:

4 ounces of canned fish with bones (salmon, sardines),

1 cup of dried beans (red or kidney beans, white or fava beans or chickpeas),

½ cup of nuts (almonds and filberts are highest in calcium, walnuts and pecans are fair, peanuts do not count),

½ cup of seeds (pumpkin seeds are best, sunflower are fair).

## CALCIUM SUPPLEMENT

Take a calcium supplement as insurance. Calcium *carbonate* is the most common, but calcium *citrate* is the most soluble. Take 400-600 milligrams each day. The best time to take calcium is at bedtime. Blood calcium levels fall overnight, so you not only help your bones by taking it just before sleep, but as a bonus you may sleep better and have fewer leg cramps.

## 3 VITAMINS

Take a multivitamin/mineral tablet or capsule to provide the vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, K, folic acid, manganese, copper and other nutrients that may also play a role in preventing osteoporosis.

## 4 EXERCISE

Get vigorous exercise at least three times per week.

## 5 ALCOHOL—TOBACCO

Abstain from, or be moderate in the use of, tobacco and alcohol.

## 6 OTHER MEDICATIONS

Be careful if using aluminum-containing antacids, drugs containing cortisone, and diuretics (used in treatment of high blood pressure and heart problems), because they can deplete minerals such as calcium.

When you read about King Solomon and the building of the Temple, or watch a modern-day church being built, take a moment to think about the mortar between the bricks.

The strength of the slacked-lime mortar used by ancient builders as well as the Portland Cement mortar used by bricklayers today comes from calcium. Calcium is key to our bodies as well. Our bodies, our "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 6:19), need good mortar throughout. ■





# FOREMOTHERS OF FAITH

## Anna Sarah Kugler

L. DeAne Lagerquist

*"I labor  
here  
because  
of  
Christ's  
command."*



Anna Sarah Kugler was the first American Lutheran woman to serve as a medical missionary in India. She combined faith, skill, persistence, ingenuity and sensitivity in her nearly 50 years of service to the gospel.

Anna Sarah Kugler was born in Ardmore, Pennsylvania, a few years before the Civil War, to a family who valued education and service. Her father, Charles, served on the school board, the Lutheran Publication Society, and in the state legislature. Her mother, Harriet, taught their six children Bible stories and hymns.

It was in Sunday school that Anna first heard God's command to carry the gospel to others, after a Baptist missionary on furlough described Christian work in India. Soon after, the young Lutheran girl directed her life toward going to India herself. To prepare herself she enrolled in the

*Dr. Kugler is shown above with her assistant, Dr. Ida Scudder, and the people in India.*

Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania and was graduated with honors.

A missionary from South India urged Kugler to apply at the Gurmukhi Mission, the first such effort to use her medical skills among the women there, but no Lutheran women had ever gone out as a physician before. So the Women's Missionary Society agreed to send Dr. Kugler as a teacher instead.

In 1883 she arrived at the Gurmukhi Mission to take up her work: officially as a teacher, and unofficially as a doctor. She got her medical supplies thanks to the contribution of a Quaker supporter. Two years later the Lutheran Women's Missionary

vention appointed Kugler a medical missionary and provided funds to rent a dispensary and purchase medicines.

In Lent, 1892, after a discouraging year, she wrote about why she continued her work: "I may have been in danger of working for the gratification of the people. That danger at least is past. I labor here because of Christ's command, a command that ought vividly to mind as we are more passing through the close scenes of His earthly life."

For nearly five decades Anna Kugler combined educational and medical work. She emphasized the importance of each activity and noted how spiritual and physical ministries reinforce one another. Being called in to treat a sick woman sometimes opened a door for a girl to be taken to school, where she would hear about Christ.

Later in her career Dr. Kugler wrote, "There are those who say that a physician cannot be a good missionary. We do not agree with them, for we have known too many good medical missionaries. And no one has better opportunities of speaking for Christ than the surgeon . . . or the physician who has by skilled attention been instrumental in giving back the life of a loved child. But it is very essential that there be a well-organized corps of helpers in the ranks of Bible Women, and these we are fortunate in having." Like many during this vigorous mission era, Kugler wrote letters about her work, urging her readers to realize the true spirit of Christianity." Church periodicals published these to inform church members about the ministries they supported and to encourage continued prayers and financial support. In her writings, and during her visits to

the United States, Kugler highlighted three types of activity: work with secluded Hindu women; schools for Hindu, Muslim and Christian girls; and medical work.

Several others helped Dr. Kugler in these ministries. By the late 1890s an American nurse and second doctor shared the work in a newly completed hospital. Additional workers came from the Indian Christian community.

Graduates of the Christian girls' school were Bible women and teachers in villages. Kugler cooperated with Dr. Ida Scudder in founding the women's medical school in Vellore.

Throughout her years in India Dr. Anna Kugler was respectful of Indian customs, but not uncritical. Because ignoring practices related to caste would keep patients away, her hospital observed the rules.

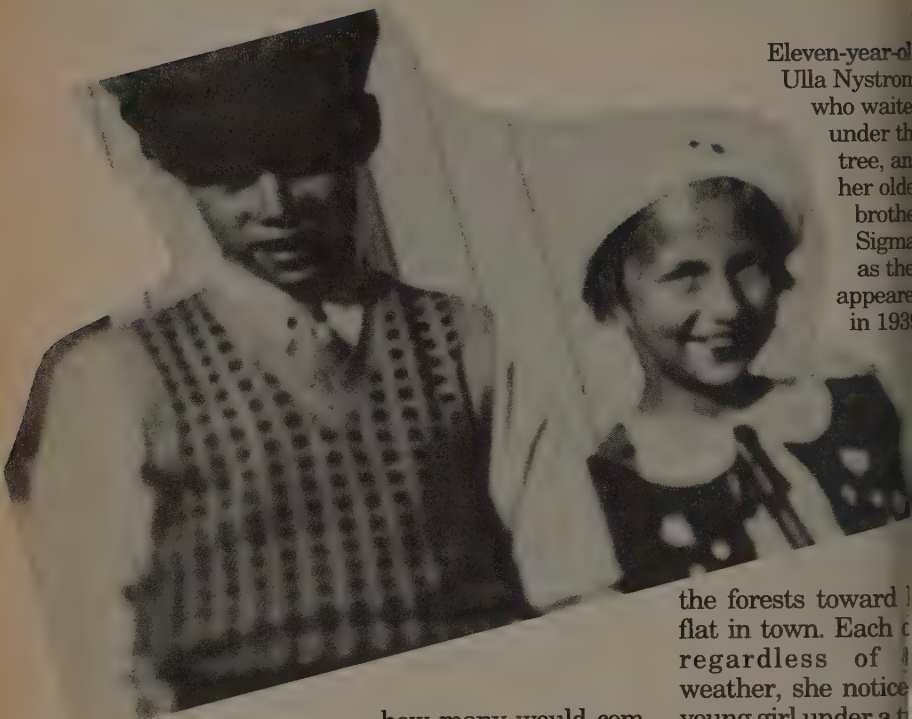
She explained: "Our object is not so much ourselves to break down the evil customs which will be built up again as soon as the patient leaves us, as to lead them so far into the light that they, seeing the evil or foolishness of them, are willing to forsake them." While Kugler had learned early that human gratitude was not always a reliable measure of her work, nonetheless she won the high regard of Indians and British alike.

After her death in India in 1930, the hospital Anna Kugler founded was named in memory of her faithful ministry. As the story told by a unnamed missionary spoke God's call to Anna, Kugler's story urges us to serve faithfully in the work to which God calls us. ■

*DeAne Lagerquist is an assistant professor of religion at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota.*



# waiting under the tree



## Monika Lidman

The year was 1938. Europe was in turmoil. The young school-teacher's first assignment had placed her far from her hometown, where she left behind refined, well-dressed folks who spoke proper Swedish. She had serious misgivings about her teaching mission in this tiny Nordic town, with its strange dialect, harsh climate and health perils.

She thought of her students and wondered

how many would complete their education. The children of farmers, fishermen and loggers, many of her students would be called back to the land, sea, and forest, for the survival of their families. Some would fall prey to tuberculosis, which still claimed high numbers in the northern latitudes. She could not help questioning her impact on their lives. What was she doing here with her looms and paintbrushes?

At the end of each school day, the teacher mounted her bicycle and headed through

the forests toward the flat in town. Each regardless of weather, she noticed a young girl under a tree. The girl gave the teacher a smile and a wave with each passing.

The teacher became curious. One day, she eased her cycle off the wet path and spoke with the round-faced child. The girl curtsied and with all of the courage an eleven-year-old could muster, asked to join the teacher's class.

The teacher knew that the girl was from a household infected with tuberculosis. In herself, that spelled a certain future for the girl's educational prospects. It seemed

Eleven-year-old Ulla Nyström who waited under the tree, and her older brother Sigmar as they appeared in 1938.



t to direct the girl's  
ention toward more  
ctical, domestic  
rses. Not wanting to  
t the child's feel-  
s, the schoolteacher  
her that the class  
s full. She wished  
child "good day"  
pedaled off.

he waif-like, wide-  
d girl continued,  
ever, to wait under  
tree. She was there  
next day, and for  
ay days to follow. It  
s difficult for the  
cher to pass and  
n her eyes from the  
ngster's soft smile  
slow wave.

inally, the teacher  
ld no longer bear to  
s the child. She ac-  
nowledged the child's  
sistence and invited  
to join the class.  
girl could not con-  
n her excitement.  
blue eyes danced,  
she gave a happy  
ek before running  
eward.

appy days fol-  
ed. The teacher  
ched the girl thrive  
the magical class-  
n filled with sun-  
t, master's prints,  
ls of flowers, and  
s of brightly colored  
a. The girl produced  
work, showed ar-  
ic discipline and  
nise, and became  
teacher's pride. For  
girl, the class was a  
ctuary, a respite  
n the sadness at

home.

The following spring,  
the girl's mother died  
from tuberculosis. The  
teacher's star pupil  
withdrew from school  
at age 12 to finish the  
job of rearing her four  
siblings.

To mask her concern  
for the child's future  
and the pain in parting,  
the teacher gave the  
girl a hug and a sachet.  
Neither the teacher or  
the child would ever  
forget their meeting,  
their time together, or  
their good-bye.

The seeds planted in  
1938 blossomed much  
later. The girl grew to  
be the beauty of the  
land. She met and fell  
in love with a young  
American. In America,  
she married and bore  
three girls.

She offered her  
daughters a home  
which stimulated artis-  
tic expression and ap-  
preciation as it empha-  
sized the importance of  
education. She encour-  
aged her children to  
reach for their dreams.  
She taught them that  
perseverance is every-  
thing. She told her sto-  
ry of waiting under the  
tree, a story her daugh-  
ters would not forget.

I wonder how my life  
would have been, had  
that patient young girl  
lacked such a deter-  
mined spirit. Had that  
hopeful youngster not

waited under the tree. I  
may not have known  
brilliant colors, a col-  
lege education, or Vi-  
valdi. Lucky me. The  
girl under the tree was  
my mother. ■



*Monika Lidman is a  
photographer, artist,  
and writer living in  
Boulder, Colorado,  
where she attends grad-  
uate school. She is a  
single parent with two  
children. In 1988 she  
was a recipient of a  
Piero-Wade-Wade  
scholarship sponsored  
by Women of the ELCA.  
"The Women of the  
ELCA scholarship gave  
me a boost toward the  
finish line," writes Lid-  
man. "I offer this story  
as a thank-you to all of  
the Women of the  
ELCA." For Women of  
the ELCA scholarship  
and grant information,  
see pages 42-43.*

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# ANNOUNCING

## Scholarship Programs

Generosity. A commitment to helping women realize their potential. Dedication to mission. People ministering to people. Stepping stones. The makings of a scholarship program.

One Women of the ELCA scholarship recipient writes: "At times since my husband's disability I have had some big struggles to deal with and to overcome; however, I never lost my faith, and the church has always been there for me in those times of struggle. I shall always be grateful to the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for their belief in me in giving me this scholarship. It is another example of how Christ has touched my life. . . ."

### Scholarships for "mature women"

Women of the ELCA scholarships are awarded to mature ELCA laywomen—"mature" meaning those who are returning for vocational or academic degrees after being out of school for at least four years. Recipients may not be current high school students, or women presently in col-

lege who have not had a minimum four-year interruption in education between high school and college. A limited number of scholarships are available for undergraduate or graduate work, as well as for vocational training. Women of color are encouraged to apply.

Women of the ELCA scholarships are awarded on an annual basis. Scholarship funds come from the interest monies generated from bequests and wills of women committed to helping other women realize their potential.

### Application dates

Applications for scholarships may only be received in the Women of the ELCA churchwide office between October 15, 1989, and February 15, 1990. Applicants must return the required forms by February 15, 1990, to be considered for a scholarship. To secure an application and criteria information, write:

Scholarships  
Women of the ELCA  
8765 West Higgins Road  
Chicago, Illinois 60631-4189.

*Generosity, a commitment to helping women realize their potential and dedication to mission are the makings of a scholarship program.*

# ANNOUNCING

## Grants Programs

Every year Women of the ELCA give out money to projects that encourage the development of human resources, especially among women, in the United States and globally. Money to support this program comes from the Fund for the Development of Human Resources. Human resources can be strengthened by meeting spiritual, social, emotional, educational and/or physical needs of individuals.

### Should my organization qualify?

The money available from the Fund for the Development of Human Resources is to be used to supplement available resources and assist individuals or groups for whom use of a grant will have an expanding multiplier effect.

Grants will not be given to rents for rental or purchase of land or buildings.

The plan for the program or project should be one in which there is cooperation with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and/or Women of the ELCA.

Priority shall be given to those individuals or organizations which are the poorest of the poor.

Projects should involve women, not only as clients, but also in the

planning, decision making, implementation, and evaluation of the project.

★ Projects should meet needs in the community that are not currently met by other agencies or services in the area.

### Evaluating Applications

In reviewing the applications, women of the ELCA will place high value on those projects that: have the least access to other funding sources; contribute to self-determination and empowerment, rather than dependency; demonstrate creativity and fiscal responsibility; and recognize the interrelationship between the economic and spiritual needs of communities.

### Application deadline

Applications for grants must be submitted to Women of the ELCA between December 1, 1989 and February 1, 1990. Except in the case of emergency situations, recipients of grants will be chosen by April 15, 1990 and receive funding in May 1990. For a grants application and/or further information write:

Women of the ELCA  
Grants Program  
8765 West Higgins Road  
Chicago, Illinois 60631-4189.



# MISSION:

## *Growth*

### Leadership and Women of the ELCA

Many women have gained leadership skills through their roles in the women's organization. Now, as in the past, women mentor each other—with more experienced leaders helping new leaders assume tasks and responsibilities.

Leadership in Women of the ELCA is also encouraged through churchwide resources. A variety of helpful program materials and information comes to women through leadership mailings, the Women of the ELCA newsletter, the three annual resource packets, and through Lutheran Woman Today.

An important leadership resource, "Helps for Congregational Leaders," is a series that covers a variety of subjects, from how to plan and run a meeting to how to form support groups for sharing and caring. The "Helps" series is sampled in the Women of the ELCA resource packets, and is also available for purchase from Augsburg Fortress. The Women of the ELCA resource catalog lists these and other publications, including those on how to lead small Bible study groups.

Leadership development is an im-

portant part of synodical and churchwide conventions and gatherings. In 1990, for instance, there will be leadership training available for women of color and younger women at the Multicultural Leader event just prior to the 1990 Women of the ELCA triennial convention in Anaheim.

Conference and cluster leaders are trained both in general and specific leadership skills by the synodical organization leaders. Synodical leaders receive training through churchwide staff regional gatherings and board skill training events. Congregational leaders benefit from synodical and cluster/conference leadership training experiences.

If you have been hesitant to assume a leadership position with Women of the ELCA, be assured that God is with you, and remind yourself that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Remember, too, that your sisters in faith will be there with training opportunities and support to affirm and assist you in your tasks. [For series of just such mutual support, see the tributes, pages 3-12.—ED.]

—Marilyn El

*"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*

# MISSION:

## Community

### Families 2000

Families come in all shapes and sizes with diverse gifts and problems. Living issues, day care, everyday expenses, health care, educational environmental crises, and other concerns cause stress for families.

The response comes "Families 2000" a project sponsored by the National Council of Churches of Christ. The project's purpose is to set forth a biblical vision of families, and minister with families.

Each denomination or agency in the NCCC (including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and members of the ELCA) will be planning strategies for the 21st century, culminating in an ecumenical North American event to be held in Chicago April 9-14, 1991. The hope is that the project will not end with this event, but that it will continue to minister as participants take back to their groups new directions for family education, for advocacy and for mutual support.

The 1991 event will bring together leaders, program staff, decision makers, education and family ministers at all levels in the church—congregational, regional, and nationwide. Participants will ex-

amine the situation of today's family and how churches and agencies minister with families. They will be reclaiming a biblical perspective that calls us to challenge and change our assumptions about families.

Families 2000 will also enable participants to seek new visions for justice in economics, sexuality, spirituality, and those aspects of life that fundamentally affect families.

If you would like to become involved in Families 2000, here are some steps to take in your congregation:

- 1) Identify key leaders in family-life ministries and encourage them to get involved in Families 2000.
- 2) Bring people together in a mini-event to share their concerns about families and the future.
- 3) Sponsor a leader in your congregation or local area to attend the Families 2000 event in 1991.

For more information on Families 2000, contact: Sherry Harbaugh, ELCA Division for Congregational Life, at 1-312-380-2564.

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MISSION:

Action

## Women and Peace with Justice Week

What's happening in your congregation during Peace with Justice Week, October 16-24, 1989? It's not too late to get involved! This year's theme, "In God We Trust: The Other Side of the Coin," asks us to examine some important issues. Although we may touch these words every day when handling change, do we ever stop to consider the weight of such words? What does "In God We Trust" really mean to us?

As a nation, does the United States place more trust in notions of economic and national security than in God? The week offers us a chance to educate ourselves, to share what we know, and to affirm our commitment to a global vision of justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

Peace with Justice Week spans several important celebrations that can offer focus or emphasis for planning. *World Food Day*, October 16, is an international day to focus on hunger. The *Peace Sabbath* (October 22-23) examines security and justice in terms of Shalom. And on October 24, *World Disarmament Day* is celebrated as a time to consider our national security options.

Over the past seven years, participation in Peace with Justice Week activities has grown tremendously. With more than 40 national religious organizations participating, Peace

with Justice Week serves to unite people of faith in a common quest.

Women of the ELCA is one of many religious organizations to support and participate in Peace with Justice Week. At least two Women of the ELCA participants, Dana McConnell and Myrtle Rose, attended the planning session for this year's celebration.

Last year in Columbia, Missouri, Dana McConnell and other members of the Interfaith Peace Alliance worked together on a weeklong series of events, including the formal proclamation of Peace with Justice Week by the Columbia mayor! What can your group, congregation or community do?

Information on Peace with Justice Week went to every congregation in the May 1989 Women of the ELCA resource packet. Since this is the only Peace with Justice Week information that went to every ELCA congregation, women have the responsibility for taking the lead in encouraging and developing observances in their congregations.

If you'd like more information on planning activities, call the Peace with Justice Week office in New York City at (212) 682-3984.

—Jennifer Wi



The following discussion of Matthew 5:1-12 is taken from *The Gospel in Art by the Peasants of Solentiname*. See page 16 for a related story. This commentary on the Gospel by Nicaraguan peasants is illustrated by Marina Silva (a *campesino* in Solentiname), a part of which is reproduced on the front cover of this magazine.—ED.]

# The Beatitudes

**nesto:** "In the Bible the poor are often called *anawim*, which in Hebrew means 'The poor of Yahweh.' They are so called because they are the poor of the generation of Yahweh, those that God is going to liberate by means of the Messiah. It's like what we now understand as the 'oppressed,' but in the Bible those poor people are also considered to be good people, honorable, kindly and holy, while their opposites are the oppressors, the rich, the proud, the impious."

**via:** "The poor in spirit or the poor in God are the poor, but provided they have the spirit of the oppressed and not of the oppressors, provided they don't have the mentality of the rich."

**d Tomas:** "Because we poor people can also have pride, like the rich."

**ejandro:** "What we see here is that there are two kingdoms. One is the kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of love, of equality, where we must all be like brothers and sisters; and the other thing is the system we have, which isn't brand new, it's centuries old, the system of rich and poor, where business is business."



**Angel:** "That's why it seems to me that we have to interpret carefully. If we just stick to the fact that we're poor and God has said that the kingdom of God is for the poor, then we'd end up saying that, well, because we're poor we already have the kingdom of God and we can do anything."

**Ernesto:** "I've just had a visit from a young fellow from the north, from Estelí, from a poor town. He is a *campesino*—like yourselves—and he was saying that there to get together for their Masses, first they have to ask permission from the police, and the police captain said that those gatherings were dangerous. The captain is right, for they gather there to talk about the Gospels. Those Christians of the earliest Jewish community, who had taken the name *anawim* before they were called Christians, were so called not only because they were poor but also because they were persecuted. Because 'poor of Yahweh' (or 'poor in spirit' in these Beatitudes) is the same as saying persecuted."

**Tono:** "That didn't use to happen here because the Masses were in Latin. The priest read these things but he read them in Latin, and he didn't explain them to the people. So the Gospels didn't bother the rich or the military." ■

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## Decision Making

Structures and processes shall foster mutuality and interdependence and shall involve people in making decisions that affect them.

## Leadership

Leaders in this community shall practice interdependence and teamwork and strive to enable others to carry out their responsibilities. They shall provide a leadership which supports and empowers others within the community. They shall recognize their accountability to the triune God, to the ELCA, to Women of the ELCA, and to others with whom they serve.

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